

NEWS RELEASE

**U.S. Forest Service
Inyo National Forest
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For Immediate Release

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Bishop Creek Unauthorized Route Restoration Assessment Open for Review

The Inyo National Forest announces that the 30-day public review for the *Bishop Creek Unauthorized Route Restoration Project Environmental Assessment (EA)* opens July 18, 2013.

Inyo National Forest has prepared an EA to implement a restoration project on unauthorized routes on the White Mountains Ranger District, including Bishop Creek, Horton Creek, Coyote and Redding Canyon areas. The forest proposes to conduct restoration activities on 49 unauthorized routes and to allow access on 12 currently unauthorized routes. Of the 12 currently unauthorized routes, eight would be open for administrative, permitted use to provide access for private land owners on the forest. The other four are proposed to be added to the National Forest Transportation System (NFTS) for public motorized use. The unauthorized routes were not added to the system per the 2009 Travel Management Record of Decision.

The forest has identified three objectives for the project: 1) to protect and enhance soil quality by stabilizing eroding sections of routes; 2) to promote the recovery of native vegetation cover and plant communities on route surfaces; and 3) to improve water quality/watershed function by stabilizing routes with known off-site erosion and sedimentation.

Under the Proposed Action, the Inyo National Forest would conduct nine types of restoration activities designed to meet the project's purpose and objectives:

- Using vertical mulch (hand piled native vegetation that acts to increase moisture and shade for new sprouts) and imbedding local rocks to provide sites favorable for plant growth
- spreading native ground mulch
- adding waterbars or other drainage features to reduce soil erosion and sedimentation,
- seeding and planting native vegetation
- subsoiling, chunking and ripping compacted soils
- removing berms on the sides of the routes (outsloping)
- removing fills and culverts
- full re-contour of road surface
- raking

The EA is available in hard copy format or can be viewed on the Inyo National Forest website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/fs-usda-pop.php/?project=38723>. To obtain a copy of the EA or if you have questions, please contact Project Leader Todd Ellsworth at 760-873-2457, tellsworth@fs.fed.us, or 351 Pacu In. Bishop, CA, 93514.

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